

**STATE SENATOR • RAYMOND E. BASHAM • 8TH DISTRICT**

# **Basham Press Release**

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## **PRESSURE MOUNTING FOR HEARING ON SMOKE-FREE RESTAURANT BILL**

### **Sen. Basham Pushing Committee Chair for Hearing & Vote**

LANSING- State Senator Ray Basham (D-Taylor) increased the pressure today on Senate Commerce Committee Chairman Jason Allen to hold a public hearing and vote on Senate Bill 186 which prohibits smoking in all Michigan restaurants. Sen. Basham released to the public a letter to Chairman Allen outlining why a hearing and vote on the bill is the Senate's ethical responsibility.

"For every eight smokers the tobacco industry kills, it takes one nonsmoker with them," wrote Sen. Basham. "This is three times the number of deaths (17,000) caused by drunk drivers every year."

The letter is Sen. Basham's third formal request to Chairman Allen for a hearing and vote but the first released to the public. Sen. Basham argued firmly that the Legislature has an ethical responsibility to address the issue of second-hand smoke.

"While the Michigan Senate cannot eliminate 100% of second-hand smoke, I believe it is morally irresponsible for us to allow a regulated industry to expose its customers to poison," wrote Sen. Basham. "Second-hand smoke is the third leading cause of preventable death in this country, killing 53,000 nonsmokers in the U.S. each year."

Senate Bill 186, introduced by Sen. Basham, is supported by health advocacy groups such as the American Lung Association. States like California, Maine, Vermont, Utah and Maryland have already adopted similar smoking bans.